

WINNEBAGO COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2010
LWCD Conference Room, James P. Coughlin Center

Convene: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Barker at 9:00 a.m.

Present: LCC Members: Nancy Barker, Bruce Bohn, Chuck Farrey, Sue Locke, John Reinert, Dan Stokes and Bob Warnke

LWCD Staff: Tom Davies

Others Present: Brian Maedke, USDA Wildlife Services, Steve Easterly, WDNR, Peter Peters and Mat Masters, USDA-FSA

Absent: None

Approve February 4, 2010, LCC Meeting Minutes: A Farrey/Warnke motion to approve the February 4, 2010 LCC meeting minutes, passed 7-0.

Announcements:

- Tom distributed the last *Thursday Note* from WLWCA and informed the LCC that the annual conference had been rescheduled to December 9 and 10, 2010. Tom also mentioned that the fund raising efforts for the WLWCA budget shortfall were continuing and that some local conservation clubs had responded. The Poygan Sportsmen's Club was donating \$800.00 for 2010.
- Tom informed the LCC that the LWCD GIS Mgr position review process had occurred and that the information was given to Karon Kraft on February 26, 2010 for her to review with Executive Harris. Tom stated that he is hopeful that a positive decision allowing the LWCD to fill the vacancy will be forthcoming.
- Tom informed the LCC that a final allocation plan had been received from DATCP/DNR and that the missing funding had been reinstated. The LWCD staff and support grant for 2010 will be approximately \$153,000.
- Tom shared with the LCC that SB576-Legislation to amend the Conversion Fee rules was on the State Legislative calendar for March 4, 2010. Tom explained that it was related to Item C. on the LCC meeting agenda.
- Tom reviewed a report of the Deer Donation Program and explained that in the last ten years Winnebago County hunters had donated 989 deer for processing.

Business Items:

Receive and Review Wildlife Damage and Abatement Claims Program (WDACP) Denied Claim Appeal from Ron Bahn

Brian Maedke and Steve Easterly reviewed for the LCC the reasons for the original denial of the claim which was no hunting hours recorded from mid February 2009 to September 12, 2009. They explained that the rules state that 80% (8 deer) of the harvest goal (10 deer) are supposed to be killed before September 15, 2009. Mr. Bahn had logged only 8.25 hunting hours and had no deer harvested.

Mr. Bahn explained that he could not get people to hunt during those required months and that when some of the hunters had harvested deer in the past, they were “turned off” by the presence of unborn fawns in the does during field dressing. This coupled with the fact that the surrounding neighbors were very much opposed to the hunting, had added some additional challenges to getting individuals to hunt during the early months. Mr. Bahn also shared that the landowner’s grandchildren were being harassed in school for allowing the shooting to occur.

Brian and Steve pointed out that after September 15, 2009, Mr. Bahn’s hunting logs showed extensive effort to harvest the needed deer, recording 863 hunting hours during the remainder of the allowable season and yet only three (3) deer were harvested. Brian stated that based on the serious amount of damage to Mr. Bahn’s crops, this indicated that the deer were not staying in that area and/or had become nocturnal and were not present during legal shooting hours. Brian reinforced the need to get hunters involved during the early months of the program when more deer are vulnerable/available for harvest.

Based on the fact that Mr. Bahn had always met past program requirements, and the unique extenuating circumstances regarding the neighboring landowners, the LCC decided to reverse its original denial of his claim. The LCC explained to Mr. Bahn that they rely on and support Brian and Steve’s judgment and experience with the WDACP implementation and issued him a firm warning that he must get hunters involved early as required by the program. He must make every attempt to harvest the targeted number of deer within the specified timeline. The LCC stated for the record they would not offer this leniency again should this issue arise with him in the future. A Warnke/Locke motion to reverse the original claim denial and approve the claim of Ron Bahn passed 7-0.

USDA, FSA 2009 Annual Report and New Programs Review

Peter Peters reviewed the 2009 FSA Programs and associated payments and discussed how each program supported the agricultural industry in Winnebago County. A total of \$3,193,193 was paid out in various forms of support for 2009.

Mat Masters reviewed the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program with the LCC and explained that the SURE payments are calculated based on 60% of the difference between the SURE Disaster Program Guarantee and the calculated Total Farm Revenue. The LCC thanked Peter and Mat for their fine reports and invited them back at any time to share FSA information.

Review and Approve/Disapprove supporting the resolution to “Delay Implementation of the Farmland Preservation Rezoning Conversion Fee” brought forward by the Planning and Zoning Committee

Tom reviewed the reasoning behind the P & ZC resolution as it related to the Farmland Preservation Program. Chuck Farrey said he was in support of the resolution but based on conversations with State Towns Association officials he felt the resolution should be amended to include a specific two year delay of implementation of the conversion fee. Following additional discussion and to allow time for discussion with the P & ZC, a Farrey/Reinert to lay over the item until the April 1, 2010 LCC meeting passed 7-0.

Report on the March 1, 2010, Working Lands / Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) Informational Meeting presented by DATCP, UWEX, LWCD and P & Z

Tom reviewed the content and format of the two different presentations. The afternoon presentation was focused on the program overview and landowner requirements to achieve compliance with the revised FPP. The evening session was geared more towards the planning and zoning implications for towns and counties. Chuck Farrey attended both sessions and also provided his perspective on

the presentations. Both Tom and Chuck agreed the meetings were beneficial and got local governments talking about the work and requirements associated with the program.

Review and Approve Winnebago County Water Quality Improvement Program Cost Share Agreements (CSA) to provide funding for eligible projects

There were no CSAs to approve and the LCC took no action on this item.

A Reinert / Stokes motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:40am passed 7-0.

Tom Davies, Recorder